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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

Access to the internet at home has made me more free than having a driver's license has. I found the great job that I have over the internet, I keep in touch with my family (who live out of state, over halfway across the continental U.S. from where I live in Chicago) using videoconferencing software, and I developed a budding relationship with the woman who is now my spouse in the early days of internet chat, over AOL Instant Messenger.

I've used the internet using a dial-up modem through a small, local ISP; through DSL and now broadband, and the monolithic, nationwide internet providers have made their mark, setting new standards for bad customer service. Comcast was voted "Worst Company in America" by Consumerist, twice. The ranks of "Worst Customer Service in the U.S." have been filled by AT&T, CenturyLink, Sprint, Directv, and Dish Network.

When we lived closer to family in the Bay Area of CA, I often helped older family members with their ISPs and with tech support, and it was a relief to live in an area where there was actual competition in Internet Providers - including small, but successful, local providers who were able to provide access through some of AT&T's copper wire infrastructure, who had vastly better customer care and impressive, affordable rates.

AT&T knew that companies who used their twisted pairs to connect people to the net were successfully competing with them, and AT&T interfered with local providers' ability to provide service, when they could. When my brother's family wanted to sign up with one of these smaller ISPs, AT&T actually took down his copper wire phone line, making it impossible for them to switch, and then replaced it with fiber cable, through which (of course) only they could provide internet access.

After months of wrangling with them, they succeeded in getting the copper wire connection back, and switched over to the local service. But they were without internet for months, and my brother's career is that of a computer programmer - so being online at home meant, for him, being able to work at home when needed.

I know that phone providers were, for many years, government mandated monopolies - and that the

nature of creating linked networks may have required some top-down organization, and the guidance of the FCC.

But utility deregulation allowed prices to drop and for competition to enter and improve both costs and services for almost every American citizen.

We need the continued presence of new, competitive providers so that the big and powerful nationwide carriers don't have a de facto monopoly on this vital connection between the consumer and everything on the internet - jobs, family, instruction, and commerce, not to mention all the other things made possible online, like getting connected with the government (like the FCC!) and providing feedback for companies, both for-profit and not-for-profit.

Don't let price hikes keep new internet providers from competing, or entering the market. Don't let the top dogs of internet providers eat the little dogs of local small business competition. We need for the FCC to stand up for consumers and local, competitive businesses.

Letting the huge players dictate the rules is bad for the country and, as a market failure, would be bad for the game that is free and competitive Internet providing.

Thank you,

Aaron Holt